

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LONDON 04218 161304Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----006612 161305Z /53
O 161255Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4200
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T LONDON 04218

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PARM, UK, NATO
SUBJECT: ERW

1. THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN BONN IS PASSING TEXT OF
STATEMENT ON ERW/SS20 WHICH WE UNDERSTAND WAS AGREED IN
WASHINGTON MARCH L5. BRITISH WILL TELL FRG THAT
OFFICIALS HERE BELIEVE THE TEXT MEETS GERMAN CONCERN
THAT OFFER BE SET AGAINST BACKGROUND OF SOVIET ARMORED
THREAT. BONN WILL BE ASKED TO SUPPORT STATEMENT DURING
MARCH 20 NATO DISCUSSION. BRITISH HAVE ASKED FOR FRG
RESPONSE TODAY, MARCH L6.

2. ACCORDING TO FOREIGN OFFICE, GELB NOTED YESTERDAY
THAT STATEMENT COULD INDICATE WHY WE HAD DECIDED AGAINST
TRADING ERW FOR TANKS. BRITISH THINK SUCH AN ADDITION
WOULD BE UNWISE AND WOULD MAKE THE STATEMENT LONGER AND
MORE DEFENSIVE. THEY ARE MAKING THAT POINT TO THE
GERMANS.

3. HMG IS ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT TIMING OF ANNOUNCEMENT.
IT FEARS THAT ANNOUNCEMENT ON MARCH 23 WOULD NOT HAVE
DESIRED IMPACT IN EUROPE BECAUSE OF EASTER WEEKEND.

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THEREFORE, BRITISH WILL SUGGEST IN WASHINGTON THAT
DECISION BE MADE ON MARCH 23 AND PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT
ON TUESDAY, MARCH 28.

4. FINALLY, UK WOULD LIKE KILLICK TO CIRCULATE
STATEMENT MORNING MARCH 20 BEFORE MEETING AS BRITISH
TEXT WHICH ENJOYED SUPPORT OF US AND FRG. IN HMG

VIEW THIS WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO US TAKING THE LEAD AND
COULD MAKE SLEDDING EASIER WITH OTHER ALLIES.

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NNN

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